

Reading Matthew Without Anti-Semitism

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She|Her

Anti-Semitism vs. Anti-Jewish

- ❑ Anti-Semitism : Based on racial theories
 - ❑ Relationship to Holocaust
- ❑ Anti-Jewish : Discrimination based on the religion
 - ❑ Used in Christian beliefs

Why?

1. You should

Matthew vs. Scribes and Pharisees

- ❑ Matthew is neither anti-Jewish nor anti-Semitic
- ❑ Matthew is criticizing the Jewish leaders
 - ❑ The Scribes and Pharisees opposed Jesus' views on special topics
- ❑ Wants to win over the Jewish community - New leadership

New Leadership - Matthew's Criticisms

- ❑ Matthew and Jesus' followers are the only fit leaders
 - ❑ Only they can get God's true word across
- ❑ Accused Jewish leaders of being hypocrites and misunderstanding God
- ❑ Opposed to leadership titles (Rabbi, master)
 - ❑ Jesus is the only leader
 - ❑ Jesus's followers : brethrens and servants to each other

Hypocrisy

- ❑ Scribes and Pharisees synonymous to hypocrite
 - ❑ “The Scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach but do not practice” - Matthew 23:2-3
- ❑ Matthew’s own hypocrisy:
 - ❑ “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” - Matthew 5:44

Intention

- Matthew's problem is with Jewish LEADERS not all Jewish people
- Provide new leadership
- Matthew 's intention was not to be anti-Semitic /anti-Jewish

Perception

- Hate towards all Jewish people
- Contributed to anti-Semitism used in future generations
- Division, not unity

Interpreting Matthew

- ❑ Distinguish which Jews / which Judaism you reference
- ❑ Understand goals of the Pharisees
- ❑ Educate yourself

“Even if his polemics were within in the 1st century Jewish community and thus not Anti-Semitic or Anti-Jewish, inner cultural polemics can kill”

Saldarini. A. J, (2001), 174

Citation

Saldarini, A. J. 1. (2001). Reading Matthew without anti-Semitism. *The Gospel of Matthew in current study*, 166-184.